



THE INVASION OF KOSOVO FROM THE OTTOMANS IN THE XIV CENTURY

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Abstract:

After the death of King Dusan which resulted with the fall of Raska, the economically advanced cities in Kosova: Novobërda, Trepça, Prishtina, Prizreni, Peja etc., remained partially under the Slavic reign of Stefan Lazar and Gjergj Brankoviq, whereas the western cities remained under the reign of Albanian aristocratic families such as Balshaj and Dukagjini. After the successful campaigns of Ottomans in 1427-1428 and 1441, the territory of Kosova was conquered by the Ottomans. The successful Hungarian and Polish campaigns against the Ottomans in the Battle of Nish in 1443, managed to overthrow the Ottomans from the Balkans. However, after the Battle of Varna in November of 1444, the Ottomans regained reign on the territory of Kosova. Seeing that Gjergj Brankoviq resurfaced as an Ottoman ally during this time, the Ottomans acknowledged him the right to reign over a large part of the Kosovar territory, as a vassal. After the fall of Constantinople on the 19th of May 1453, Sultan Mehmet II in the spring of 1455 initiated a strong military operation, and managed to ultimately include a large part of the Balkans, including Kosova, under the Ottoman reign. In 1455, the Ottomans conquered: Novobërda, Trepça, Prishtina, Janjeva, Vuçitërna and Lipjan. After the conquest of Novobërda, Bellasica and Klina were conquered as well. Prizren was initially conquered in 1455, but thereafter an insurgency against the Turkish conquest erupted and as a result the Ottomans only managed to ultimately conquer it in 1459. The Turkish conquest of Peja as well as a large part of Dukagjini Plain occurred in 1462. After these events, Kosova fell under the Turkish reign which lasted until 1912.

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Introduction

The Ottoman state's victory in the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 and the consolidation of Ottoman rule at the end of the 14th century facilitated further Ottoman invasions in Albania and Kosovo. With the takeover of Skopje (1392) by the Ottomans, the very favorable geographic position where the shorter roads linking the Ottoman Empire to all Albanian lands and the other Balkan regions were transformed the city of Skopje into a very powerful military base, Declaring it *pashasanxhak* or a mansion of Bejlerbeu of Rumelia, who was the commander-in-chief of Ottoman armies for its European part.ⁱⁱ In 1393 the Ottomans took Zvečan and thus the Ottomans strengthened their presence in Kosovo. Part of the territory of Kosovo namely Dukagjini Plain with its territories in: Peja, Istog, Klina, Gjakova, Prizren and Suhareka were under the administration of the Dukagjinians. The aristocratic feudal dynasty of the Dukagjinians created vassal relations with the Ottoman state. For the creation of these reports, the letters of the noblemen of the Dukagjinians of 1387 testify to the Ragusa authorities that they can freely pass through their lands because they have entered into agreements with the Ottomans.ⁱⁱⁱ This proves that under the Dukagjinian governing authority were the territories along the Lezha-Prizren road, as well as the exit to the coast.^{iv} At this time in the second half of the 16th century. XIV Balshares, the arboreal aristocrats, formed their own state that extended to the northern part of the arboreal area. The territory on which the power of the Balshina lay in the early 1600s. XIV was called Zeta.^v At first, they governed Budva (Budva), Tivari, Ulcinj and Shkodra, which also made their

ⁱⁱ*Historia e Popullit Shqiptar I : Ilirët Mesjeta Shqipëria nën Perandorinë Osmane gjatë shek. XIV - vitet 20 të shek. XIX*, Tiranë: Akademia e Shkencave e Shqipërisë Instituti i Historisë 2002, 378.

ⁱⁱⁱ The letter of Lek Dukagjini sent to Ragusa on December 30, 1387, has this content: "Nobles of the honorable city of Dubrovnik, I write to you with my covenant and my brother: come freely to my land, do not be afraid of anything". Regarding the customs stamp, you pay the legal duty tax you paid earlier to other nobles who were previously in these countries. And do not be afraid of anything, because I have peace with the Turks. *Burime të zgjedhura për Historinë e Shqipërisë Vëllimi II, Shek. VIII - XV*, Tiranë, 1962, 190.

^{iv}S. Rizaj, *Kosova gjatë shekujve XV, XVI dhe XVII: administrimi, ekonomia, shoqëria dhe lëvizja popullore*, Prishtinë: Rilindja 1982, 29.

^v G. Gelcich, *Zeta dhe Dinastia e Balshjave*, Tiranë, 2009, 18.

headquarters.^{vi} Balshaj in the years 1371 - 1385 extends power over the city of Peja, Prizren and the area of Novobërdo. Since these territories were under the rule of Balsha's state, it proves the document or political-trade agreement between George II Balsha and Ragusa, issued on November 20, 1379. With this document Balsha's state through its ruler Balsha II confirms to Ragusa town the old trade-related privileges, but also had to pay the customs tax on the territory of the state of Balsha where it is said; "... to pass freely the merchants of Dubrovnik (ex Ragusa) through my land ..., and in Dania (customs place) and in Kriva Reka (customs near Novobërdo) to pay the customs tax as much as they paid when he was alive My brother, Mr. Gjergji (Gjergji I Balsha, BM).^{vii}

While the part of the Kosovo Plan with cities like Pristina and Vuciterna was under the rule of Serbian despot Stefan Lazarevic. At this time, the Serbian state formation inherited by Stefan Lazarevic was very weak. To cope with Hungarians who were very active and posing a direct threat, he approached Ragusa's help, but without success. Help was also sought by Sultan Osman Bajaziti. Sultan Bajazit offered vassal position Stefan Lazarevic who was accepted by Serbs. With this agreement, Serbia entered vassal reports within the Ottoman Empire, promising the Serbs to defend themselves from the Hungarian invasion. The agreement was completed in 1389.^{viii} This was also supported by the Assembly of the Serbian Orthodox Church and its Patriarch Spiridon.^{ix} The vassal agreement between Bayaziti and Stefan Lazarevic was compiled in this way; Serbia that has accepted the Ottoman vassal is obliged that personally, together with its own army, to participate in all wars. Meanwhile, due to silver minerals found in Serbia, (gumus madenler dolayisile) the Serb prince had to pay tribute to the Ottoman state. In addition, he (Stefan Lazarevic) was obliged to give his own sister Oliver (13 years old) to Bajaziti.^x Milica (Lazar's wife) on behalf of her son, Stefan Lazarevic, who was a minor, accepted the Ottoman vassal that implied the payment of the annual contribution as well as the provision of troops in a certain number for the Ottoman military expeditions whenever the Ottoman ruler demanded. The boys of Lazarus Stefani and Vuku were obliged to appear twice a year in Bajaziti. Immediately followed Stefan Lazarevic's journey with the Orthodox Patriarch to Adrianople to show their submission.^{xi}

^{vi} *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar I*, 301.

^{vii} *Burime të zgjedhura*, 186.

^{viii} M. Tërnavë, *Diskursi shkurtër nga toponimia, Beteja e Kosovës gjatë shekujve XIV - XV dhe vendosja e atëhershme e pushtetit turk në Dardani-Kosovën e shekullit XV*, Prishtinë, 2007, 70.

^{ix} N. Malcolm, *Kosova një histori e shkurtër*, Prishtinë-Tiranë 2002, 84.

^x Tërnavë, *Diskursi shkurtër nga toponimia*, 71

^{xi} Malcolm, *Kosova*, 84

The ratio of Serbian vassals to the Turks was manifested on the occasion of the Angora (Ankara) battle in 1402 among the Turks and Central Asia's prominent leader Timur Lengu, who had invaded Iran, Iraq, Syria, etc. In this battle, on the Ottomans side, many military units were taken by Serbia and Kosovo under the leadership of Stefan Lazarević and Gjergj Branković.^{xii} However, the Mongolian leader Timur Lengu's military forces prevailed both by the number of military forces and combat skills. So he won the battle, causing great losses to the Ottomans. This defeat was basically the Ottoman state, because since 1403, in 1413, the war for the Ottoman throne began between the sons of Sultan Bayaziti. This situation within the Ottoman state enabled the Serbian despot and its despot Stefan Lazarević to be proclaimed. Ankara's defeat had resulted in a powerless derision in all the territories previously ruled by the Ottomans. In the Ottoman state for more than ten years, we will have civilian power struggles between the sons of Sultan Bajaziti.^{xiii} Also, there are civil wars between Stefan Lazarevic and Gjergj Branković. In November 1402, Stefan Lazarevic's troops clashed with the Branković forces assisted by the Turkish army in Gracanica. Stefan Lazarevic, succeeded in defeating Brankovic. Despot Stefan Lazarevic came into conflict with his brother for power. In this situation, Stephen sought help from the king of Hungary, becoming his vassal.^{xiv} At the same time, he kept the Vasality reports with the Ottomans with Sylejman the son of Bajaziti. In this situation, when the Ottoman state was in civil war between the sons of Bayazit (Murat and Mehmeti), an arm of the Turkish Empire supported the forces of the brother of Stephen. An army led by Suleiman, the son of Emperor Osman Bajaz, came to the aid of Stephen's brother. War broke out throughout Kosovo. In the spring of 1409, at the time of the conflicts between Lazarevic brothers, cities in Kosovo such as Novobërdë and Pristina were involved in devastating attacks.

From the king of Hungary Sigismund, the despotic Stefan assisted a military ward that settled in Novo Brdo, from which they raided and plundered in the surrounding area, and in one of those invasive infractions, Prishtina was destroyed. Under the pressure of the Ottomans, the despotic Lazarus took Vuk the southern part of the country, including Novobrdó.^{xv} In the battle of 1410 in Pristina, Stefan's brother and the Turkish army supporting him suffered losses.^{xvi} At the beginning of 1412, Sultan Musa entered the territory of Ugleshë and approached Novobërdó but failed to get it.

^{xii} Ibid., 86.

^{xiii} Ibid., 87.

^{xiv} Ibid.

^{xv} В. С. Јовановић, "Ново Брдо средњовековни град - Novo brdo Mediaeval Fortress", Ново Брдо, Београд 2004, 58.

^{xvi} In this battle, Stephen's brother was slaughtered and slain. Also, Turkish leader Sylejmani was captured. He was sunk in jail by the order of Brother Musa, who was in conflict with him. Malcolm, *Kosova*, 87.

The highly strategic and convenient position for protection, long walls and high towers enables them to successfully defend themselves even to the largest military forces. After hearing that despot Stefan is coming with his army, Sultan Musa withdrew from the Novobrdo encirclement. Stefan Lazarević settled in Novobërdo, while Sultan Musa fled to Albania.^{xvii} The Raguzans who had taken part in the protection of Novo Brdo were thanked by Despot Stefan in the letter sent to them saying: They were brave people who showed loyalties by not fearing the sword of the Ottomans.^{xviii} In 1425, despot Stefan Lazarevic will agree with Gjergj Branković, and despotic heir Stefan was elected himself Gjergj Branković, as Stefan Lazarevic had no heirs. After receiving the power, Gjergj Branković will continue to rule the greater part of Kosovo's territory, all this due to the conditions of vassality with the Ottomans. With the death of the despot Stefan Lazarevic (1427), the extension of Gjergj Branković's rule will be significantly expanded. In the years 1427 - 1428, the Ottoman forces penetrated deeply into the territory of Kosovo, occupying its main cities, with the exception of Novobërdë / Novo Brdo.^{xix} During 1427, Turks will surround Novoberdo. The resistance in Novobërdë was great, which made the Ottoman big siege. Novobërdo's siege will end with a new deal between Gjergj and Ottoman Sultan. According to Ottoman law, the lands of the rulers, in the concrete case of Stefan Lazar after he died, could not inherit Gjergj Branković. Knowing this danger, Gjergj Brankovic entered into a new arrangement of Vassalty to the Ottomans. He directly accepted the Ottoman central government by paying their annual contribution to them in the amount of 50,000,00 denars (Stefan Lazarevic paid them 40,000, 00 ducats) by offering military troops of 2,000 horsemen under the command of the sons of the sultan or the military Sultan. With this agreement, the first phase of the Ottoman invasions in Kosovo 1389 - 1427 ends.

Ottoman invasion in Kosovo in the years 1427 - 1453

Gjergj Branković, who was the ruler of most of Kosovo's territory, tried to cooperate with the Hungarians. This move caused the invasion of Ottoman invasions. In 1432, Gjergj Branković to make a vow to Sultan Murat II and to remain his faithful vassal, he married his daughter Mar with Sultan Murat II. But his efforts to maintain his position in cooperation with Hungarians and Ottomans did not yield results. On August 6, 1439, the Ottoman army under the leadership of Bey Arzanovic managed to occupy several territories near Novobërdë, such as Makresh, Tripolj etc., but the city of Novo Brdo was

^{xvii} Јовановић, "Ново Брдо средњовековни град", 58.

^{xviii} Ibid., 59.

^{xix} Malcolm, *Kosova*, 90.

not occupied.^{xx} In June 1439, the Ragusa government advised its citizens living in Novobërdë / Novo Brdo that in case of any possible attack by the Ottomans, stay strong, as they had done before, and show respect for the leaders of Novobërdo.^{xxi} The first invasion of Novobërdo by the Ottomans came in 1441, and the first was occupied around Novobërdë, while the city was unbeatable. After a powerful siege, on July 27, 1441, the city was invaded by Bejlerbeu of Rumelia (Balkans) Shehabedin.^{xxii}

Sultan Murati, moreover suspecting that Branković's family was plotting against him, blinded both Gjergj Branković's sons and himself had fled to Hungary.^{xxiii} During this time Kosovo's territory will be under Ottoman full power for several years. In 1443, the king of Poland, Vladislav, who thus receives the title of the king of Hungary, prepares a multinational military expedition against the Turks in order to expel the Turks from Europe. In the coalition army, apart from Poles and Hungarians, German, Bosniak, Croatian soldiers and Gjergj Branković soldiers also participated.^{xxiv} Thus, under the command of King Vladislav and Janosh Hunyadi, allied forces entered Serbia, victorious harvest near Niš to the Ottoman army (fall 1443), penetrating Bulgaria's Sofia. During the advance of the Ottoman forces, these forces had occupied a part of the territory of Kosovo until Novobërdë, leaving the Ottomans.

Approximately two years later Novobërdë was again received by Brankovic. This came as a result of the successful penetration of the Hungarian army in 1443 on the road Nish-Sofia to Zlatica. It is not known whether the insurgency population or the Ottomans were at risk of the success of the Hungarian army in the Balkans, or the despotic Gjergj sent a unit to take the city. But after the severe defeat of the Hungarian army in Varna in 1444, Novobërdë was faced with Ottoman attacks. Daut Beu from Sitnica underwent serious invasive attacks in Novo Brdo. Thanks to an agreement with Novo Brdo's leaders, Daut Beu left Novobërdë / Novo Brdo.^{xxv} In the spring of 1444, Murati II had sent an emissary to Gjergj Branković (it is known that he brokered Sultan's wife Mara, Gjergj Branković's daughter) to inform him that if he withdraws from the Hungarian (Hungarian) expedition he will restore power to the territories he had. It is said that Gjergji agreed promptly, so that the initial period of Turkey's direct rule over Serbia 1439 - 1444 ended. Thus, Gjergj Branković again became its ruler under Ottoman vassal.^{xxvi} Since Gjergj Brankovic became a vassal of the Ottomans, now he did

^{xx} Јовановић, "Ново Брдо средњовековни град", 59.

^{xxi} М. Динћ, *Са историју рударству средновековној Србији и Бони*, II, Београд 1962, 59.

^{xxii} Ibid., 60.

^{xxiii} Malcolm, *Kosova*, 90.

^{xxiv} Ibid., 91.

^{xxv} Јовановић, "Ново Брдо средњовековни град", 61.

^{xxvi} J. Drançolli, *Arbërit ndërmjet Perëndimit dhe Lindjes gjatë mesjetës*, Zagreb: Misioni katolik Shqiptar në Kroaci 2008, 379-384.

not allow the Hungarian army under the command of J. Hunyadi to pass through his territories and Huniadi had to cross the Danube through Bulgaria to march to Varna. In Varna, in November 1444, Hunyadi's army was completely destroyed by Turkish forces, while Hunyadi managed to escape, while the Polish-Hungarian king was killed.^{xxvii} Here, we can say that based on the data, Serb rulers ruled in a part of the territory of Kosovo, with their constant concentration in the town of Novobërdë / Novo Brdo. But this rule was also taken into Vassal relations with the Turks and that no war occurred as alleged by Serbian historiography against Ottoman invasions throughout this time to regain Kosovo. The wars of the prominent Serbian rulers had an inner character, between the rulers of Rash, who fought between them for the economic and territorial power. From this view it turns out that Stefan Lazarević's reign was nothing more than a whirlwind of military expeditions, battles and siege - without any steady power in Kosovo's lands during this time period.

Even at the time when we have installed Serbian rule in Kosovo, at this time it is a double rule, or we can say that they were transmitters of Ottoman power, since in general Serbian Serbs were in irony reports, which means that they in this Time there was no opportunity for independent rule of Kosovo. Moreover, they were also pushed to concentrate those forces in the territory of Kosovo, as the northern parts of Serbia together with the city as Nis that was in their vicinity and the city of Belgrade was held under Hungarian rule. Finally, in the period between 1389 and 1444, the territories of the Serbian despotate as well as the territory of Kosovo were under the influence of the political circumstances of that time, which are manifested in numerous invasions by the Ottomans from the south and from the north by the side of the Hungarians. The Serbian despotate at this time compared to them was too weak, and without great power to influence the course of time. It can be argued that the Serb despotati faced the time of full submission from the Ottomans until 1455, only by virtue of an apparent geographical distance, which compared to the arboreal divisions found in the face of Ottoman attacks and Ottoman intentions at that time.

The final invasion of Kosovo by the Ottoman Empire

With the invasion of Constantinople in 1453, the Sultan Mehmeti II (known in Ottoman history as Mehmet Fatih, Mehmet Conqueror) also changed the foreign policy approach of the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire did not now apply the indirect approach of rule through the vassal ratios of the countries that invaded it but required direct access to the occupation and administration. In 1445, the Serbian despot was renovated,

^{xxvii} Ibid.

extending to the territory of Kosovo. But even at this time there is the power of Ottoman authorities in Kosovo's centers, in addition to the Serbian one. The dual rule in Kosovo ended in 1455, when Sultan Mehmeti II (1451 - 1481), having conquered Constantinople (1453), decided to conquer Kosovo in a definitive way. Novo Brdo was often the capital of local rulers. There rulers had their palaces there. The highest leaders of Novobërdë held the title of Voivodeship. In the capacity of the Duke of Novo Brdo was, in 1434, Hronko. And in 1454, the Duke of Novo Brdo was Llesh Spani.^{xxviii}

In 1454, Mehmet II sent great military forces against Gjergj Branković. Towards the end of the year, the Ottomans managed to invade most of South Serbia and Middle Serbia. In this difficult war situation in the Novo Brdo area against Ottoman military forces, the local population sought to in any way seek solutions in the preservation of their property. Thus, the leader and defender of Novobërdë, Arbërori Llesh Spani on December 27, 1454 sent to the bank of Ragusa a deposit of 390 ducats (with obligation that after 20 years he will withdraw this money).^{xxix} The Spani family was a well-known arboreal family of the Middle Ages. Pjetër Spani, along with other families of Muzakaj and Dukagjinas, represented the territory of medieval Arberia in the entire Arbëror Assembly in Lezha under the leadership of Skanderbeg 1444. Pjetër Spani with his sons, Lleshi, Bozhidar, Uroshin and Mirko, possessors in the valley of Kirit near Drivastos). The Spaniards maintained close ties with Kosovo, and Llesh Spani for a time administered the town of Novo Brdo.^{xxx} Of course, as a result of the severe crisis of the Ottoman attacks, many citizens of Novobërdë / Novo Brdo, traders, craftsmen and Catholic bishops released the town and sought shelter in other places where a part of the citizens was located in Ragusa.

The powerful Ottoman attack to conquer the city of Novobërdë came in the spring of 1455, where Sultan Mehmeti II piled into the Edrei army of Rumelia and Anatolia, and headed to Rumeli in Kratovo, where he was welcomed by his Bejlerbeu, Isak Begu. He demanded from Novo Brdo's leader to surrender the city without war. Major attacks continue with the arrival of Sultan Mehmeti II with military forces in Novo Brdo, according to Kritobul, the Ottomans had brought with them many professional advisers to successfully complete the siege of Novo Brdo. The Ottoman army numbered more than 50,000 soldiers (knights and pedestrians), according to Kritobuli.^{xxxi} It is not known exactly how long the siege lasted. According to Kritobul, the city was occupied after 40 days of war, and according to Ashik Pashazade, the occupation of Novo Brdo came on the 17th day of the arrival of Sultan Mehmeti II in

^{xxviii} S. Riza, "Novobërda gjatë shekujve XV dhe XVI", *Vjetari XX*, (Prishtinë 1985), 115.

^{xxix} Динћ, *Са историју рударству*, 64.

^{xxx} O. J Schmit, *Skënderbeu*, Tiranë 2008, 76.

^{xxxi} Јовановић, "Ново Брдо средњовековни град", 61.

Novo Brdo.^{xxxii} However, the siege lasted for several days, probably for nearly 40 days.^{xxxiii}

Finally, on June 1, 1455, a handover agreement was made. At this time there was also Mehmet II in Novo Brdo, and by virtue of the agreement, he promised residents that he would allow them to guard their possessions, and that women and children would not be converted into captives.^{xxxiv} However, Sultan Mehmeti II did not keep his promise. According to the testimony of a citizen witness of Novo Brdo, as soon as he was handed over to the town, the Turks were brutally brought. According to him, 74 women were kidnapped by Turks, while 320 children were taken to become a janitor in Anatolia. Serbia's despotate lasted four years. In 1456, a large Ottoman siege of Belgrade failed due to an extremely powerful castle defense from Hunyadi. However, he died a little later from the plague. By the end of 1455 Gjergj Branković died. His sons quarreled over their inheritance. Thus a favorable situation for the Ottomans was created and very easily occupied even those few countries that once belonged to the despotate of Serbia. The city of Belgrade will remain in the hands of the Hungarians for another 60 years, while Smedereva, the last northern fort in the hands of Serbs, handed over Mehmed II without war in 1459. This was the definitive end of the medieval Serbian state.^{xxxv}

According to Byzantine historians, Kritobul, Sultan Mehmet the II made the attack to conquer Kosovo in 1455, because the Serbian despise Gjergj Branković did not pay the annual ransom properly, and because he held secret links with Hungary. Meanwhile, according to Dukas, the Sultan made this attack because he wanted to reduce the Serbian state (Serbian despot) so that the Serb king remained a territory as he was of Gjergji's father, Vuk Branković.^{xxxvi} According to chronicler Byzantine Duka, Novo Brdo was occupied on 1 June 1455 on the fifth day of Ottoman invasion. In the Ottomans, they have found a large amount of gold. Then the Ottomans continued with the invasion of the castle of Trepça (Tirebce). The castle resisted one day. Out of the castles, they have taken large amounts of gold. So the Ottomans invaded a part of Kosovo's territory (without the Dukagjin Plain), also known as Vilayeti of the Brotherhood. This invasion occurred in 1455.^{xxxvii}

According to reports by Ottoman historians such as Neshri and Iben Kemal and his studies, the Ottomans for the Novo Brdo conquest were departing from Skopje,

^{xxxii} Динћ, *Са историју рударству*, 65.

^{xxxiii} Јовановић, "Ново Брдо средњовековни град", 63.

^{xxxiv} Malcolm, *Kosova*, 95.

^{xxxv} Ibid.

^{xxxvi} Tërnavë, *Diskursi shkurtër nga toponimia*, 76.

^{xxxvii} Ibid., 81.

passing through Skopje's Black Sea. The facts that the Ottoman chroniclers bring is that the city of Novo Brdo has been invaded after the fifth day of resistance, or even the seventh of resistance, after a major bombing. From this it is seen that the Turks, while invading most of Kosovo's centers in 1455, have also used firearms, among which the balls have been occupied.^{xxxviii} Constantine Mihalovic, from Ostrovica, describes the invasion of Novobërdë by the Ottomans.^{xxxix} The data offered by Iben Kemal on the invasion of Novo Brdo / Novobërdë we learn that this mining center has fallen into the hands of the Ottomans after a resistance that lasted for five days, ie the fortress was delivered on the fifth day of resistance. Other Ottoman chancellor Ashik Pasha Zadeja makes it known that the invasion of Novo Brdo has occurred after seven days of resistance.

The Byzantine chronicler, Kritobuli, asserts that the Ottomans have invaded Novobërdë / Novo Brdo after a huge bombing, which lasted forty days.^{xl} Sultan Mehmeti II, after the conquest of Novobërdë / Novo Brdo on June 1, 1455, continued to occupy the part of Kosovo. "During several days the Ottomans conquered the southwestern part of Lipjan in Kosovo, the old Prizren on 21 June, Bihor in the Valley of Lima."^{xli} However, when and how Kosovo was invaded by the Ottomans, it poses a problem, because of opposition to Ottoman sources. Thus, from the information of Iben Kemal and Neshri we learn that Sultan Mehmeti II occupied Novobërdë (June 1st), then Trepça, Zapllanin, Plavë, Bërvenik and others. Thereafter (according to Neshri and Iben Kemal), the sultan had not stayed longer in Kosovo, as he later returned to Thessaloniki to Jedrene. Therefore, if it is correct the date of the fall of Prizren under Turkish rule (21 June), it is possible that Sultan Mehmet the II did not participate in that invasion campaign against Prizren. It should be noted that Turkish chroniclers Neshriu and Iben Kemali did not mention the invasion of Prizren, Mines and Mining Settlements. He previously occupied Novobërdë, Trepça, Zaplanina, Plavë, Brvenica, etc., and later the other places, although he did not mention the invasion of Bellasica.^{xlii}

The fall of Novobërdë / Novo Brdo in 1455 marks the end of the fame of this city. In 1456 a plague appeared, and in 1459 there was a powerful earthquake (or even thought of an explosion of ore gas) to end the exile of the population. From this city, the

^{xxxviii} Ibid., 84.

^{xxxix} This was a contemporary of events and described the occupation of Novoverde. He writes "*I (Konstatin Mihalovic), who writes this, was in that country and with my brothers I was married as a Jannisaries among these boys*", Ibid., 83.

^{xl} Ibid., 83.

^{xli} Ibid., 84.

^{xlii} Ibid., 85.

exhilaration of the great Novobërda, as in Ragusa, Venedik, Veron, Kotor and so on.^{xliii} From Novobërdë, except lead and silver, black lead, zinc and iron were drawn. From Novo Brdo's oysters, except white silver (silver bianco) and silver silver, blended with gold called "silver galam" (argento de glama), which was very popular in Europe.^{xliv} Where precious metals were found, there were also workshops where the coins were (zeccha). These coins were injected through iron pans. This cut of coins was carried out under the administration and supervision of the country's patron and the Latino-Catholic customs (gabellotti). The cut was made by the goldsmiths (aurificës, ital, orresi), dubrovnikasë, kotorrasë and novobërdasët. The coin cut in Novo Brdo in the 14th century was bearing the inscription "Nouomonte monetaria argentea"^{xlv}

According to the records of the Ottoman sources of 1488 in the town of Novobërdë / Novo Brdo and the surroundings after the fall of the city under Ottoman rule, the population was approximately 40,000. The town itself had more than 5,000 inhabitants in the area of the town of Novobërdë / Novo Brdo, and its surrounding population was approximately 35,000.^{xlvi} The period of the gradual decline of this metropolis of the time began. In the city's institutions, the Ottomans removed former city government administrators, replacing them with other Ottoman-elected authorities. The main administrator was Subashi, and the first one to be elected was Kasum Beu.^{xlvii} The fortress was handled by Dizdar, while court disputes were treated by the Kadiu.^{xlviii} From the present view it can be seen that in 1455, the Turkish army led by Sultan Mehmet the II attacked and conquered the eastern territory of Kosovo with the towns of Novobërdë and Trepça. It is more than believable that at this time when these two centers were invaded, Pristina, Janjeva, Vuçitërna and Lipjan were also occupied. Meanwhile, the Dukagjini Plain at this time of conquest of the eastern part of Kosovo in 1455 is not invaded by the Turks. No source that we possess does not prove that Peja was occupied in 1455, when Novobërdë, Pristina and Trepça were occupied. Neither in the defter of 1451 - 1452, mentioning the conquest of Gjakova, does not mention Prizren.^{xlix} The Dukagjinians, aiming to preserve and strengthen their positions in 1452, entered into an accord with the Ottomans. The Dukagjinians at this time searched the

^{xliii} R. Panxha, *Novobërda gjatë shekullit XIV - XV*, (work in manuscript for Master degree), Prishtinë, 2010, 95.

^{xliv} К. Костић, *Наши нови градови на југу*, Београд: СКЗ, 1922, 175.

^{xlv} К. Јиречек, *Зборник К. Јиречека I*, Београд: САНУ 1959, 260-261.

^{xlvi} Rizaj, *Kosova gjatë shekujve*, 222. Skënder Rizaj concludes that after the establishment of the Ottoman rule, the number of inhabitants in Novoberde did not immediately fall. But it has diminished to some extent, because a considerable number have left Novoberde

^{xlvii} Јовановић, "Ново Брдо средњовековни град", 63.

^{xlviii} Panxha, *Novobërda gjatë shekullit XIV-XV*, 16.

^{xlix} Tërnavë, *Diskursi shkurtër nga toponimia*, 86.

trade routes that brought large revenues from the flow of goods between the coastal regions and northeastern areas (of the Dukagjini and Fushe Dardania plains), which were constantly under their control until in 1455 the re-occupation of the regions Northeastern and northern Albanian lands of the Ottomans.

Skanderbeg with the famous resistance to Kruja in 1450 against the Ottomans, managed to have great successes on the separatist tendencies of some prominent Albanian leaders, such as Arianit and others. The hardest was the path of incorporating Dukagjinas' possessions into the state of Skanderbeg. By 1455, where Sultan Mehmet the II began intensive action for the invasion of Fushë-Dardania and Dukagjini Plain, Dukagjin's possessions had not suffered even the devastating consequences of the Ottoman attacks because they were still confined to the occupied lands and related to them Trade routes that brought significant customs revenue. Therefore, the Dukagjinans especially during the years 1450 - 1455 followed a policy somewhat separate from the Lezha Covenant and the state of Skanderbeg, offering them to the Ottomans due to economic and trade interests. Skanderbeg used various means to remove them from the Ottomans, also seeking mediators of foreign states, such as the Papacy etc. In 1452, with the commitment of Pope Pius II, Skanderbeg signed an act of co-operation with Pal Nicholas Dukagjini.ⁱ

Sultan Mehmeti II leaving Peja without conquest started to Serbia and conquered the territory of Kopaonik and later Smederevo (1459). For this reason there is the possibility that Peja at that time should have met the Dukagjinian domain, but under the Ottoman vassal.ⁱⁱ From these facts and circumstances, Dukagjini Plain was not invaded by Ottomans at this time. The Turks have allowed Peja to remain under the power of the Dukagjinans, who were Turkish vassals. Even the city of Prizren was occupied during 1459, while Gjakova and 80 villages of its wide and narrow surroundings were conquered and recorded during 1451 - 1452. Historian Hazimi Shabanovi, the Turkish invasion of Peja, seeks it in the distance between 1456 and 1467, while Skender Rizaj, in 1462 - 1463. The finding of S. Riza is considered in historiography as a sustainable thought.ⁱⁱⁱ With the invasion of the Turks of Fushë-Dardania and part of the Dukagjini plain during 1455 - 1462, the Dukagjinian possessions were severely damaged and exposed to the same risk. Under these conditions, the Dukagjinans broke the links with the Ottomans and in the late 1950's. XV they come fully connected to the central power of Skanderbeg.

From the above it turns out that the Turks in 1455 occupied: Novobërdë, Trepça, Pristina, Janjeva, and certainly Vucitërnën and Lipjan. After the invasion of Novobërdë,

ⁱ *Historia e Popullit Shqiptar*, 428.

ⁱⁱ Tërnavë, *Diskursi shkurtër nga toponimia*, 86

ⁱⁱⁱ *Ibid*, 87

Bellastica and Klina were invaded. Whereas Prizren once invaded in 1455, and if an uprising against Turkish rule was organized, its occupation was definitively made in 1459. The occupation of Peja and a part of the Dukagjini plain in Kosovo by the Turks was reached Year 1462. Thus, Kosovo's territory fell under Turkish rule and from this time began the period of Turkish rule, which lasted until 1912.^{liii} During the Ottoman conquest, Kosovo's cities suffered relatively large damage. During the Turkish invasion, all known Kosovo centers have suffered damage, but the biggest damages have involved large mining centers. In the case of this invasion, destruction and obvious weakening have experienced Trepca and Janjeva, while from other centers Prizren, Prishtina and Bellastica.

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^{liii} Ibid.

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